

STATE OF ALASKA

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September 18, 2000

Mr. Chick Fagan
National Park Service, Office of Policy
Room 2414, Main Interior Bldg.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Fagan:

The State of Alaska has reviewed the National Park Service's draft revision of Policies and Guidance, Chapter 10, Commercial Visitor Services. The State appreciates this opportunity to review these materials, as well as the Service's continuing efforts to integrate State involvement in national park planning. The comments in this letter represent the consolidated views of State of Alaska agencies.

Section 10.2.2.1 states that the Service will give preference to out-of-park private enterprise if adequate commercial facilities are available to serve visitors outside of park boundaries. The State of Alaska would like for individual park managers to have flexibility to plan for appropriate visitor services for each park.

When making decisions regarding commercial visitors services, the Service should consider not only what works well for park managers, but also the context of the park, its relationship to surrounding land and resources, and park user satisfaction.

Thus, we would like to underscore the importance of the planning process each park uses to implement this policy. With a good planning process, the Service can assist affected communities in planning appropriate visitor services or facilities, and can forge partnerships with communities and businesses to provide these services. Service staff in our state already do this well, and Alaska's national parks provide good examples of how such cooperation can work.

We would also like to recommend that the Service strongly encourage concessionaires to source materials crafted or manufactured in the region of the park, preferably materials that meet criteria for state or regional product identification programs, such as Made in Alaska, Sierra Designs, Made in Maine, and the Alaska Silver Hand program.

Thank you again for this review opportunity.

Sincerely,

/ss/

Tom Atkinson
Project Review Coordinator

cc: John Katz, Governor's Office, Washington, D.C.
Frank Rue, Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game, Juneau
Patrick Pourchot, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources, Juneau
Michele Brown, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Conservation
Deborah Sedwick, Commissioner, Dept. of Community and Economic Development
Patrick Galvin, Director, DGC, Juneau
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